

CHARLIE BAKER
GOVERNOR



KARYN POLITO
LT. GOVERNOR

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CONTACT
Elizabeth Guyton
elizabeth.guyton@state.ma.us



Governor Baker to File Legislation to Comply with Federal REAL ID Act

BOSTON – Today, Governor Charlie Baker will file [legislation](#) to bring Massachusetts further in line with the requirements of the federal REAL ID Act. The Act, the result of work by the 9/11 Commission, sets minimum standards that states must meet during the issuance and manufacture of driver's licenses and Massachusetts resident identification cards.

"We are committed to working with the legislature and our federal partners to provide both greater security and customer choice for our credential holders," **said Governor Baker**. "As new standards take effect in the coming years, this legislation will allow us to meet the standards mandated by the federal government so that our citizens will be able to enter federal buildings and board domestic flights."

Once enacted and all Registry systems have been upgraded, all new driver's license and Massachusetts identification card applicants will need to meet REAL ID standards to be issued a license or ID card in the Commonwealth. The model to be proposed in the legislation offers current license or ID card holders with valid social security numbers the option to renew their existing credential or apply for a REAL ID.

Only a REAL ID carries certain benefits such as serving as a valid form of identification to enter federal facilities and, once enforcement begins, the ability to board domestic flights.

Massachusetts credential holders currently are not subject to enforcement rules set

by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) because the Commonwealth has a valid compliance extension, as do approximately half of the states in the country. The Registry of Motor Vehicles will file for a second extension with DHS and would need authority to begin implementation by the end of the legislative session next summer.

Under current Massachusetts law, licenses and IDs are issued for a period of 60 months. The legislation will make a critical and required change toward REAL ID compliance by authorizing the Registrar to issue credentials valid only for a customer's authorized length of stay in the United States if that time is less than 5 years.

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